

EXECUTIVE SECRETARIAT**Routing Slip**

TO:		ACTION	INFO	DATE	INITIAL
1	DCI		✓		
2	DDCI		✓		
3	EXDIR		✓		
4	D/ICS		✓		
5	DDI				
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7	DDO		✓		
8	DDS&T		✓		
9	Chm/NIC				
10	GC				
11	IG				
12	Compt				
13	D/EEC				
14	D/Pers				
15	D/OEA				
16	C/PAD/OEA		✓		
17	SA/IA		✓		
18	AO/DCI				
19	C/IPD/OIS				
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SUSPENSE

Date

Remarks:

Executive Secretary

8/15/83

Date

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THE DEPUTY SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

Executive Registry

83-3851/2

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20301

11 AUG 1983

Honorable James M. Beggs
Administrator
National Aeronautics and
Space Administration
Washington, D.C. 20546

Dear Jim:

Thank you for your letter of July 27 in which you clarified your views on current space related issues.

The DoD is well aware of NASA's position with respect to undertaking development of a Space Station as the next major space initiative of the United States. However, we in the national security community have been very positive in our statements that a Space Station does not compete favorably in our prioritization of programs that we find necessary to support. The major thrust of DoD space initiatives is to integrate space systems into the warfighting capabilities of our operational forces and to enhance their survivability. While we would, no doubt, find some utility for a Space Station in such areas as technology development, we are unable to make a compelling case for DoD support of a Space Station in view of its tenuous contribution to our primary mission. To the extent that a more permanent presence of man in space might contribute to the satisfaction of national security requirements, we believe that a more promising approach is to extend the capabilities of the Shuttle, to which we are all fully committed and in which we have already invested major resources. While this approach might be less than optimum to satisfy some civil requirements, I am sure that it would provide increased utility in satisfying many prospective civil needs, as it would enable the Spacelab to achieve more of its originally advertised capabilities.

On the issue of the fifth Shuttle Orbiter, given the priority of national security launch requirements as recognized in our National Space Policy, DoD needs can be met by the currently approved program. We recognize, however, that the Shuttle must satisfy aggregate national space transportation needs and, for that reason, support the continued maintenance



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of Orbiter production capability until those needs are better defined. If, in your judgment, civil needs can be adequately supported in the near term without a fifth orbiter, we defer to your analysis in this area. I note, however, that if a decision were made to extend the duration of Shuttle flights rather than proceed directly with a Space Station, revisit of this issue would be appropriate.

With respect to future space transportation needs, the DoD is primarily concerned with more responsive and survivable launch systems to meet unique national security requirements. I am sure we all would feel more comfortable if we had a backup to the fully operational Shuttle, but again, we are faced with the matter of competing priorities for limited resources. I would welcome further discussion on this subject but suggest it would be productive to wait until we have an opportunity to review the efforts of the Defense Against Ballistic Missiles activities to see what special space transportation requirements might evolve from these studies and how those requirements could modify our investment strategy.

Thank you again for your letter. I believe it is critically important that we continue to exchange candid views in these areas of mutual interest.

Sincerely,


Paul Thayer

cc: Honorable William Clark
Mr. John McMahon ✓

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